

FLOOR SCHEDULE FOR WEDNESDAY, MARCH 4, 2015

HOUSE MEETS AT:	FIRST VOTE PREDICTED:	LAST VOTE PREDICTED:
10:00 a.m.: Morning Hour 12:00 p.m.: Legislative Business	2:30 – 3:00 p.m.	3:00 – 3:30 p.m.

****Members are advised that, due to anticipated inclement weather, the House will no longer be in session tomorrow, Thursday, March 5, 2015.**

H.R. 749 – Passenger Rail Reform and Investment Act of 2015 (Rep. Shuster – Transportation and Infrastructure) (One Hour of Debate). This bill reauthorizes the National Railroad Passenger Corporation (Amtrak) for four years, through FY 2019, and it restructures funding according to Amtrak's major lines of business in order to provide greater transparency and accountability regarding the costs and revenues of its different business lines.

It also requires Amtrak to annually develop a detailed five-year capital and operating plan and to examine the criteria it should use in determining what long-distance routes to service; requires the development of a five-year capital investment plan with affected states for Amtrak's Northeast Corridor while creating a new federal-state partnership to finance corridor improvement projects in that plan; encourages private investment, including through direct competition to Amtrak service; and streamlines the environmental reviews of rail infrastructure projects.

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that the measure authorizes a total of \$7.2 billion over the FY 2016-20 period, including \$5.3 billion for grants to Amtrak, \$1.2 billion for grants to states for intercity rail projects and \$625 million to renegotiate and prepay a portion of Amtrak's nonfederal debt. Lastly, the White House issued a SAP in support of the bill.

The Rule, which was adopted yesterday, makes in order 7 amendments, debatable for 10 minutes, equally divided between the offeror and an opponent. The amendments are:

McNerney Amendment. Ensures that socially and economically disadvantaged businesses request for proposals are considered under Section 208 of the bill, which is intended to enhance development around Amtrak stations.

Fitzpatrick Amendment. Adds veteran-owned small businesses to Section 305 of the bill, which requires the Department of Transportation to conduct a nationwide disparity and availability study on the use of small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals in publicly funded intercity passenger rail projects administered by the FRA.

Mica Amendment. A report for Northeast Corridor Express Service that analyzes the implementation of non-stop, high-speed express passenger rail service between Washington, District of Columbia, and New York, New York, and between New York, New York, and Boston, Massachusetts.

Brownley Amendment. Requires each state to develop a grade crossing action plan, identifying specific solutions for improving safety at crossings, including highway-rail grade crossing closures or grade separations; and focuses on crossings that have experienced recent grade crossing accidents or multiple accidents, or are at high risk for accidents

Perlmutter Amendment. Requires the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to submit to Congress a report evaluating the effectiveness of the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) 2005 rule on the use of locomotive horns at rail crossings.

McClintock Amendment. Strikes all federal assistance to Amtrak.

Lipinski Amendment. Clarifies that passengers using or transporting non-motorized transportation are to be considered in the Amtrak Office of Inspector General's report, required under Section 211 of the bill, on boarding procedures at Amtrak's 10 stations through which the most people pass.

Bill Text for H.R. 749:

[PDF Version](#)

Background for H.R. 749:

[House Report \(HTML Version\)](#)

[House Report \(PDF Version\)](#)

The Daily Quote

"It is clear, members across the ideological spectrum said this week, that after two months of embarrassing legislative and messaging stumbles, the House Republican Conference is riddled with fundamental and systematic problems. Forget sweeping, ambitious tasks such as tax reform. Even the most basic GOP legislative priorities for the rest of the 114th Congress are now at risk... What's left is an environment in which members worry that pressing issues coming up over the next several months will not be able to pass. Members fear they will flub a budget, appropriations bills, a fix for the Medicare Sustainable Growth Rate, trade issues, a debt ceiling lift and myriad reauthorizations yet to be taken up... [T]he display of disunity surrounding the DHS vote has pushed even members friendly to leadership to the point of exasperation. In particular, a failed vote to pass a three-week DHS continuing resolution last week miffed members who were told it would pass and voted for it, only to find 52 Republicans voting it into failure... Centrist or pragmatist members such as [Rep. Mike] Simpson [R-ID] are openly urging Boehner to cut the conservatives loose and start striking deals on center-right legislation with moderate Democrats—or at the very least, allow the bills on the floor to fail and then hammer conservatives for voting with Democrats against what leaders view as a good bill... 'We've got to have discussions within our family and figure out, how do we move forward so we really can govern?' Rep. Diane Black [R-TN] said. 'These have got to be serious discussions specifically about what happened last week and how we make sure we get to 218, because we've got the majority and we've got to govern.'"

- National Journal, 3/3/2015